

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 34-42 are pending. Claims 34-37 have been amended in this reply. No claims have been canceled. Claims 38-42 have been added. Support for the added claims may be found, at a minimum, in Fig. 1 of the originally filed drawings. No new matter has been added. Claims 34-37 stand rejected for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,338,231 to Wilhite ("Wilhite") in view of U.S. Patent No. 56,241,535 to Lemke et al. ("Lemke"). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 34-37, as amended herein, are patentably distinct from the noted references.

Claim 34 recites a housing having a retention structure, the retention structure including a channel extending substantially in a first direction. Claim 34 has been amended to recite that the mounting tab contacts the housing so that the housing restrains the contact in the first direction *and in a second direction substantially opposite the first direction*. These features are believed to substantially isolate the fusible element (105) *in two substantially opposite directions* from the lateral (horizontal) force component acting on the contact (103) due to contact with the substrate (S2). *See, e.g.*, Figure 11 of the as-filed application. In other words, the noted features cause the horizontal force on the contact (103) to be reacted in two substantially opposite directions by the housing (101), rather than the fusible element (105), and can thereby improving the service life of the fusible element (105).

Applicant respectfully submits that Wilhite and Lemke neither teach nor suggest a housing structure having a retention structure, the retention structure including a plurality of channels each extending substantially in a first direction, and a mounting tab contacting the housing so that the housing restrains a contact in the first direction and in a second direction substantially opposite the first direction. In particular, Applicant respectfully notes that

contact between the locking aperture (42) and the locking tab (36) on the contact (14) of Wilhite does not does not restrain the contact (14) in a first direction *and in a second direction substantially opposite the first direction*. The Lemke patent also fails to teach or suggest this claim element. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 34 of the present application is not obvious over Wilhite in view of Lemke, either alone or in combination.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 34 (and claims 35-37, which depend therefrom) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and remarks.

New claims 38 recites that a distal end of a contact is positioned adjacent to an exterior surface of the housing and is movable along the exterior surface. None of the art cited in this case teaches this particular claim element. For example, Fig. 4 of Wilhite teaches a contact that is bounded within a channel. This is different than the invention recited in independent claim 38. Lemke does not teach a contact (28 or 72) that has a distal end positioned adjacent to an exterior housing surface, wherein the distal end moves along the exterior housing surface. The distal end of contact (28) is fixed. The distal ends of contact (72) do not move along the exterior surface of housing (52).

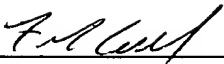
New claim 38 is allowable. Dependent claims 39-42 depend directly from allowable independent claim 38, and are allowable by definition.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely notice of allowance be issued in this case.

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